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Gov. Sisolak Announces Distance Education Plan Approvals for 16 of 17 School Districts and All Charter Schools

Carson City – Today, Governor Steve Sisolak announced that sixteen of Nevada's seventeen school districts and all of Nevada's charter schools submitted plans to the Nevada Department of Education and are approved to continue or start distance education as of Monday, March 23.

The plans stem from an emergency directive signed by Gov. Sisolak on Friday, March 20. Many districts had proactively created plans and were able to submit them over the weekend to Nevada State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jhone Ebert.

By having plans approved, schools will continue to receive payments from the State Distributive School Account and will not have to adjust the school calendar to make up for the missed time.

"I want to express my strong appreciation for the leadership and hard work of the sixteen county school districts and the charter schools who stepped up in good faith under the authority of the directive to continue supporting and providing education to Nevada's students, in coordination with the Nevada State Superintendent Jhone Ebert," said Gov. Sisolak. "We are all operating under challenging circumstances, and I am proud of our educators for coming together to find creative solutions to ensure students can continue learning despite school closures."

The emergency directive provided that schools will reopen no earlier than April 16 as a necessary step to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. It also suspended state testing requirements, consistent with the U.S. Department of Education approval on Friday of the request submitted by State Superintendent Ebert for a waiver of federal

assessments, accountability, school identification, and reporting requirements for the 2019-2020 school year.

Notably, the directive supports the continuity of education during the COVID-19 crisis by suspending all statutory and regulatory requirements related to applications for programs of distance education and expands the definition of distance education to include paper correspondence to ensure students have access to educational opportunities regardless of their means, access to technology, or at-home support.

The emergency directive provides that districts and charter schools must begin offering distance learning to all pupils no later than March 23, or the next regularly scheduled school session day. In response, Superintendent Ebert provided school districts and charter schools with the process for requesting approval Friday evening.

As of Sunday evening, the Clark County School District had not yet submitted a proposal for distance education, or alternatively, an extended school year. While the Governor worked with the Office of the Attorney General to ensure that emergency plans could be approved by the board chair and superintendent, CCSD elected to consult its Board.

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